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INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 5293
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 1268
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 5062
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0819
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JAN LIMA 1743
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5256
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 0697
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 4883
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RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 000120

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/13/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AR](#)
SUBJECT: A/S SHANNON'S MEETING WITH ARGENTINE DEFENSE
MINISTER

REF: A. 05 BUENOS AIRES 1385
[1](#)B. 05 BUENOS AIRES 3091
[1](#)C. 05 BUENOS AIRES 3145

Classified By: Ambassador Lino Gutierrez, Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: A/S Shannon, accompanied by Ambassador, met with Minister of Defense Nilda Garre January 12. They discussed the current situation in Haiti and Garre's vision for the Argentine armed forces. Garre will reconfigure the armed forces for a defensive doctrine, but also continue Argentine participation in international peacekeeping operations. Garre said the MOD is looking at ways to step up military cooperation with Chile and Brazil. A/S Shannon met separately with President Kirchner and other GOA cabinet officials (reported septel). END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Assistant Secretary Tom Shannon, accompanied by Ambassador and POLOFF (notetaker), met with Minister of Defense Nilda Garre during his visit to Buenos Aires January [1](#)12. (See ref. A and B for background information on Garre.) Garre was accompanied by Secretary for Military Affairs Jose Vazquez Ocampo, Secretary for Planning Oscar Cuattromo, and Under Secretary for Technical Military Affairs Esteban Montenegro.

Haiti

[1](#)3. (C) Garre began by praising Secretary Rice for her intervention in setting a firm date for the Haitian elections. She also noted that OAS Secretary General Jose Insulza was due to visit Haiti the week of January 16. She said, however, that the level of political violence in Haiti was untenable.

[1](#)4. (C) A/S Shannon said that economic development was linked to security and that the international community needed to create the context in which the Haitian people could recreate their economy. He said that Argentina has played an important role in a historic peacekeeping operation, namely that MINUSTAH was essentially a South American force. Shannon reiterated the importance of the Core Group meeting in Haiti the week of January 16.

Military Reform

15. (C) A/S Shannon asked for Garre,s views on the future of the Argentine armed forces. Garre said it had been a long and painful process reintegrating the Armed Forces into society after the 1976-1983 military dictatorship. She sketched out several key principles and priorities for change:

-- a) the Argentine military would be reconfigured for a defensive mission only. This would affect decisions on where units are stationed within the country, as well as the types of armaments and missions;

-- b) the armed forces would contribute to international peacekeeping operations, such as the current (major) deployments to Haiti, Cyprus, and Kosovo;

-- c) the MOD would continue to pursue military exchanges and joint cooperation with neighbors such as Chile and Brazil. (Vazquez Ocampo acknowledged that integration would be difficult, but that the political will existed to pursue existing initiatives. He said that the dialogue with Chile and Brazil had been fluid, but what was needed were concrete mechanisms for integration. Vazquez Ocampo believed that scenarios of conflict in the sub-region had been replaced by scenarios of cooperation.)

-- d) the MOD would move forward on S&T research and

cooperation, and examine the development of a defense industrial policy. (During the Ambassador's December 22 meeting with Garre, ref. C, Cuattromo said the GOA is considering ways to promote the AT-63 Pampa, produced by Lockheed in Cordoba.)

Comment

16. (C) Garre gave an interview January 8 in which she laid out very similar themes for a transformation of the armed forces, whose mission she termed "anachronistic." Her apparent enthusiasm for peacekeeping operations - shared by Vice-MOD Vazquez Ocampo - should work to our benefit.

17. (U) Reftels available at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires.< /a>>

GUTIERREZ